



# PROPOSAL

FOR KATHERINE SHOWGROUNDS & MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE

**INCLUDING**

**RELOCATION AND MODIFICATION OF CAMPDRAFT ARENA,  
SAFE ROADTRAIN ACCESS**

**AND CONSTRUCTION OF DEDICATED RODEO ARENA**

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## BACKGROUND

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The Katherine and District Show Society held the first Katherine show in 1965, and was incorporated in 1977. It was created to promote and encourage the development of agricultural, cultural, industrial and commercial activities in the Katherine Region. The show runs for a full week with the main Show Days being held on the third Friday of July and the following Saturday. It has always been a major event on the Katherine Calendar drawing people into town from all over the region, across the territory and beyond. Competitors in the Campdraft and Rodeo come from areas throughout the Kimberley region (including Broome and Kununurra) as well as outback Queensland. There are also entries in other sections of the Show from interstate, including from Victoria and South Australia. Each year the Show grows and in 2017 there were 18,700 people through the gates over the main two days. An awesome result for a town of 10,000 people.

The Katherine Show caters to everyone, whether they are towns' people, from the rural sector or just visiting. It is that "once a year" event that many people feel is mandatory to attend. Schedules and work commitments are arranged around the timing of the Show and many other organisations arrange their timetables so they can be a part of the Show. Just some of the groups represented or that we have affiliations with are:

- Australian Brahman Breeders Association
- Equestrian Australia, as well as other similar or associated groups
- Polocrosse NT
- Australian Campdraft Association
- Australian Bushmen's Campdraft & Rodeo Association

Besides the above organisations there are many other non-profit groups involved in the Show. Whether it is manning exhibit pavilions (e.g. Territory Craft and NT Ag Ass) or providing services (e.g. manning the gates, rubbish removal and catering have been provided by various non-profit organisations such as Rotary, Schools & Church groups and sporting clubs).



NATIONAL TITLE: Darcy McBean from Katherine riding Gill Bros Red Foo at the Warwick Rodeo. Darcy went on to win the Australian Bull Riding Title. Picture: Kenyon Sports Photos.

Darcy McBean – National Bull-Riding Champion for 2016 started out at the Katherine Show and still rides at the Katherine Show Rodeo whenever he can.

Picture & Caption from Katherine Times 1 Nov 2016. Full Story: <http://www.katherinetimes.com.au/story/4263677/mcbean-is-champ/?cs=1459>

The Katherine Show is also used as an educational tool by rural and town schools. It provides motivation and supplies specific projects for interaction with like minded people in a vast array of fields. Competitions such as the junior cattle handling and judging provide a great teaching resource and are always well attended. The opportunity to compete interstate is also available.

### RODEO IN KATHERINE

Rodeo is a growing national sport with many women as well as men now riding. The Katherine Rodeo caters to both local and interstate riders, and is home to a number of Territorians, born and bred in the Katherine area, who started their career in Katherine and have gone on to become professional rodeo riders, including Ronnie Whitehead. Darcy McBean, also a born and bred Katherine local was Australian Bull Riding Champion in 2016 and learnt to ride Rodeo at this venue in Katherine. Darcy stills rides in Katherine whenever he can.

Over the last 18 months a group of interested parties have been working together to devise a strategy and design to ensure this project goes ahead in order to make the facility more user friendly and safe with a dedicated Rodeo Arena. The result has been for the implementation of this project to be put at the top of Katherine Town Council’s Masterplan and work has commenced on the first stage.



International Rodeo rider Ronnie Whitehead Pictured here at the 2009 Katherine Show Rodeo

In Queensland, campdrafting is one of the fastest growing family sports. Campdrafting is already a well attended sport in the Northern Territory and still growing. The Katherine Show welcomes and encourages junior and amateur participants.

Most of the businesses in Katherine and in the wider Katherine district support the Show by way of sponsorship, as do many local individuals. Volunteers also put in over 2000 hours of labour each year directly to the Show as well as the indirect volunteer labour that is used at the Show (Non-profit groups working in order to raise funds e.g. Pirates Rugby Club are paid by the Show to do rubbish collection).

The Katherine Show has a huge impact on the town and local businesses. Using information from the Tourism NT Regional Profile, an independent survey by government consultants and the KDSS gate entry sales, 2017 results are:

- 12,097 people attended Katherine Show on Friday and Saturday with the number of gate entries being 18,700 (many people attended multiple times).
- 89% of Katherine locals attended the Show.
- 34% of attendees were visitors to the region.
- Katherine Show visitors brought an extra \$2.2 million to the town
- \$162,100 cash was dispensed from ATMs at the Show. This is in addition to gate sales and credit card transactions.

The popularity of the Rodeo at the Katherine Show is evidenced by the survey results, as shown below.

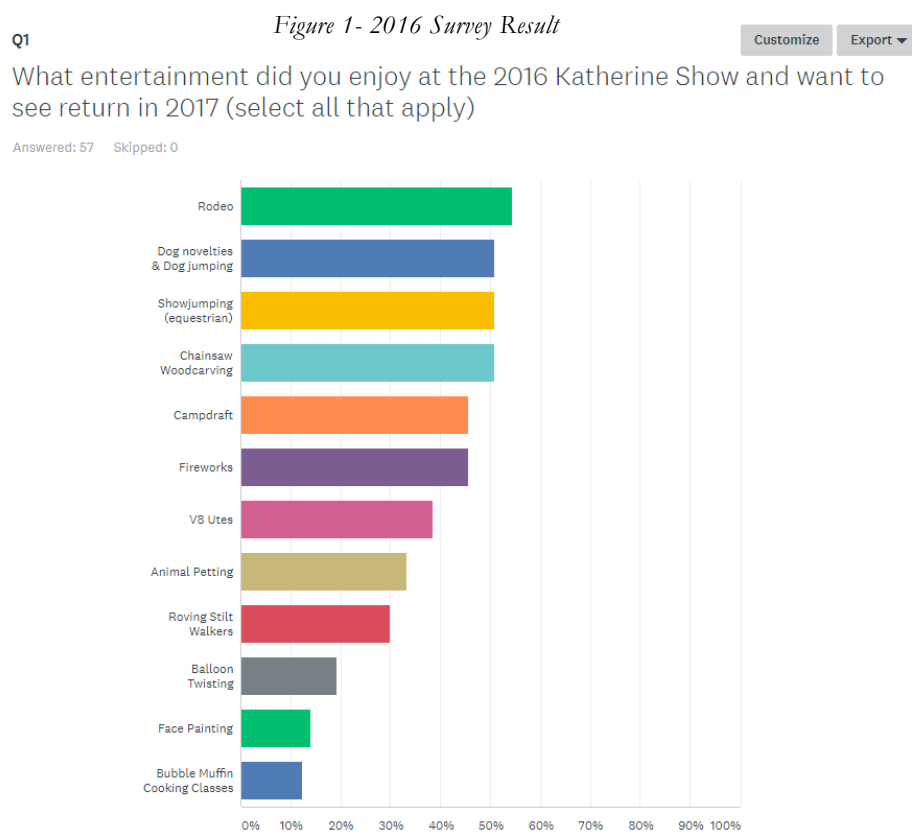


Figure 1 - 2016 Katherine Show survey shows the Rodeo as being the most popular event that patrons want to see return in the following year.

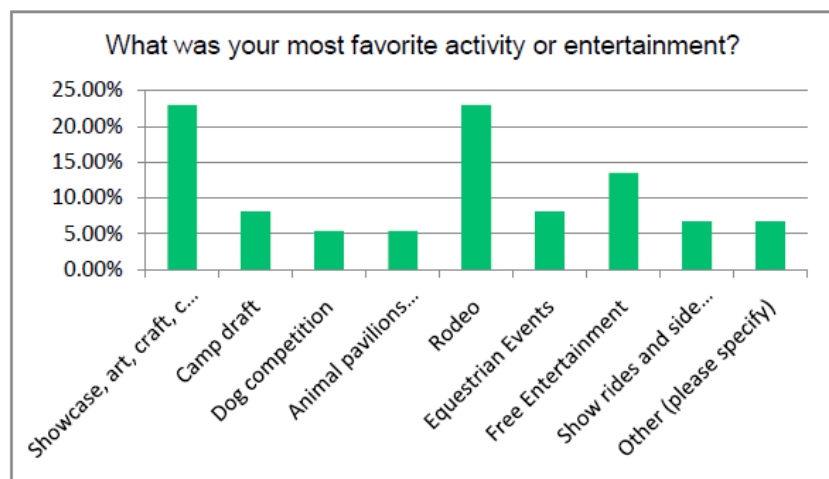
Figure 2 – Survey completed at the 2017 Katherine Show by an independent Government consultant, shows that the Rodeo has the equal most popular rating with patrons.

(Respondents came from the general showgrounds area, not from the Rodeo/Campdraft spectators.)

*Figure 2 - 2017 Survey Result*

The answer to this question was surprising in that people of all ages enjoyed the Show Case displays.

Often it was the cakes or the photos or the craft. Varied considerably from group to group. The rodeo seemed a favourite of all groups from teenagers through to seniors, though less seniors and more interest from the 21-35 age



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## PRESENT SITUATION AND REASONS FOR THIS PROJECT

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### PRESENT SITUATION

1. Currently during the Show, roadtrains delivering cattle and trucks with other livestock enter the showgrounds at the front entrance in order to supply cattle and stock for the Campdraft and rodeo. There is no “turnaround” for roadtrains and trucks so they are required to enter through one gate (front - Murphy Street) and exit through the other (back - Murray Street). The entrance is through the main carpark and pedestrian access areas to the Show; the roadtrains then proceed through the camping area to the back gate. Besides the logistical issues of ensuring the area is clear to allow room for the roadtrains, it is quite a dangerous situation with heavy transport, parking vehicles and pedestrians using shared areas and then the large vehicles driving through family camping areas.

2. Currently the existing campdraft arena is being used for Rodeos and many hours of labour is required for the setting up. This is usually done by borrowing panels and either hiring or using volunteer labour to erect the arena within the Campdraft facility; as a rodeo should be about 35m x 60m and a Campdraft arena is 90m x 100m. Much of the work required involves heavy lifting and if not done correctly can result in accidents to riders or spectators during the events, or result in animals (Cattle) getting loose. It is also both costly and time consuming.

The present configuration of the Campdraft arena has safety issues for rodeo use, with inappropriate access points and chutes being the incorrect height for horses. Additionally there is the issue of users modifying the arena to suit their individual preferences which invariably means that there are missing components or sections that need to be refurbished prior to the next group being able to use the facility. More time and expense! Spectator areas are insufficient for the current crowds (approximately 2,000 people). Rodeo participants and spectators have been requesting a permanent rodeo arena be erected for more than 10 years.

3. During the last few years the Katherine Showgrounds has been at full capacity during the Annual Katherine Show and Rodeo. With the increased numbers of large rigs being used for camping and transport of amusements the current developed areas of the venue have reached breaking point. Expansion of the facilities within the Showgrounds area is urgently required in order for the Show to continue growing, to provide overflow and other camping for the town, and to improve facility usage.

## PROPOSAL

The main roadtrain access will be through the back gate at the Murray Street entrance, follow the line of the racecourse to the campdrafting area and make a loop in order to exit through the same gate. This will totally eliminate the hazardous situation of roadtrains driving through pedestrian, parking and camping areas.

The Campdraft arena would be relocated to the north boundary freeing up enough space to erect a rodeo arena and provide additional space for larger and more site exhibitors.

Erection of a dedicated Rodeo Arena with sufficient catering and seating facilities for spectators with room for expansion. This would be suitable for all Rodeo events held at the Katherine Showgrounds during the year and will be used by a number of different organisations while eliminating the need for extensive setting up and modifications prior to the running of each rodeo event. In the long term, this area will be developed to cater for equine sports such as dressage and will be covered.

Permanent securing of panels for both the Rodeo and Campdraft will provide a safer and tamper-proof facility with little or no need of modification for regular events.

Construction of additional yards within walking distance of the Campdraft.

Perimeter fencing to separate animals, people, vehicles.

Construction of a new camping area at the east side of the racecourse. Establishment of camping facilities inside the racetrack will be considered in the longer term.

Existing Toilet/Shower facilities will be moved to make way for the arenas and to better suit the particular areas. i.e. Ablution blocks with showers will be moved to camping areas and replaced with the toilet-only facilities.

Construction of multi-purpose facilities for all showgrounds users:

- Canteen
- Toilet blocks
- Announcers box and officials stand
- Cattle yards
- Camping communal area

Users of the Katherine Showgrounds Campdraft and Rodeo include:

- Katherine and District Show Society
- Australian Stockhorse Society
- Top End Rodeo Circuit (as part of APRA)
- Australian Bushmen's Campdraft & Rodeo Association
- Katherine Country Music Muster
- Commercially run rodeos

## REASONS FOR THE PROJECT

1. Reduction in the risks associated with roadtrains delivering in areas of high public use, including pedestrians and campers.
2. To create a Rodeo facility that can be used all year round. Katherine would be ideally placed to become the centre of the rodeo circuit throughout the year with the additional benefit of other organisations being able to use the facility for increased sporting activity and fundraising events, by way of providing entertainment in the form of rodeos and other activities, such as working dog trials.
3. Elimination of safety hazards in building a temporary arena. Elimination of hazards of having temporary panels to enclose stock as the new arenas would be permanent structures which provide far greater security for penning animals.
4. Elimination of the time and costs associated with erecting a temporary arena for every rodeo event and other events requiring a similar size arena. E.g. dressage and dog trials.
5. Reduction in loss and damage of panels, as they would be permanently placed and designed for long term planning of a multi-purpose equine centre. Misplaced, damaged and incomplete sections of the arenas would be greatly reduced if the need for modifications was reduced or eliminated.
6. Increased safety for spectators at the Rodeo.
7. Increased spectator area which will lead to a reduction in spectator vehicles, people climbing on rails, etc.
8. More appropriate stabling and yarding of animals, including a sprinkler system to keep the cattle cool.
9. Additional cattle yards will reduce the need for roadtrain movement during events and having to arrange yards for cattle at a remote location. This has both safety and economic advantages.
10. Redesign of the overall facility would allow for the much needed expansion of the Katherine Show and allow greater flexibility for other organisations to run their events, such as the Australian Stockhorse Society campdrafts.
11. Establishment of a new camping area would move campers away from potentially hazardous areas, i.e. the heavy vehicle road and provide a more user friendly site. This camping area would be available for many organisations to use such as Clontarf, and The Katherine Scouts group has expressed an interest in holding events in this area.
12. This facility would provide an enclosed area for training for:
  - Campdrafting
  - Rodeo
  - Polocrosse
  - Horse & Pony Clubs
  - Various other equestrian disciplines
  - Dog trials

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## PROJECT STAGES

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### STAGE ONE – ROADTRAIN ACCESS

- Surveying
- Clearing of areas for road and campground
- Roadworks
- Removal of facilities (toilets, etc) to make way for the Campdraft arena
- Dismantling of Campdraft arena and yards

### STAGE TWO – RELOCATION OF CAMPDRAFT ARENA

Part A – preparation of area for Campdraft arena and new Rodeo Arena

- Installation of underground services and power and lighting
- Removal and relocation of facilities (toilets, etc), including sewerage
- Construction of camping area at south end and inside of racecourse (aero club site) and communal area

Part B -

- Preparation of new surface for arenas
- Construction of loading ramp at site of new yards
- Erection of Campdraft arena and yards
- Relocation of the announcers box and office

### STAGE THREE – RODEO ARENA

- Construction of Rodeo Arena (panels)
- Additional ablution facilities
- Installation of PA system and sprinkler systems within & around the arenas and cattle yards
- Construction of mounds for spectators
- Initial landscaping & Tree planting

### STAGE FOUR – FACILITIES AND CAMPING

- Canteen and catering facilities
- Permanent spectator seating and stands
- Perimeter fencing
- Final landscaping
- Construction of additional cattle yards
- Installation of NLIS tagreader

### *Notes on stages of the Project*

It is essential that stages one and two are completed prior to May 2018 so that the annual events can take place. The facility will then remain operational with specific areas under construction being isolated so that there is little or no disruption to the normal events.

It is anticipated that stage three should also be underway by May 2018; however this is dependent on the length of the wet season and additional funding from the Katherine and District Show Society and from grants.

Completion of the full project is expected to be April 2019.

### **FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

1. Cover for the Rodeo arena. This will make the arena more suitable for all equestrian and equine events, such as dressage, and will attract more widespread competition. It would also be suitable for a community market, farm machinery field days or as an entertainment venue and would become much more viable for year-round competitions for other organisations such as Horse and Pony Clubs and Dog Trials.
2. Expansion of the other livestock facilities at the Showgrounds to provide for:
  - Additional Poultry and birds
  - Potential increase in Cattle showing
  - Goats, pigs, etc
  - A dedicated animal nursery
3. Further development of the area previously used for the Campdraft, to provide for
  - Dog show
  - Entertainment area
  - Additional site exhibitor facilities
  - Rationalisation of the layout of the Showmen's Guild (Showrides & amusements)

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### **GROUPS WHO WOULD BENEFIT**

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Some of the Groups who would benefit directly from this facility include:

- Katherine and District Show Society
- Top End Rodeo Circuit (Australian Professional Rodeo Association)
- Australian Bushmen's Campdraft & Rodeo Association members (ABCRA)
- Katherine Country Music Muster
- Katherine Horse and Pony Club
- Equestrian NT
- Australian Stock Horse Society
- Polocrosse NT
- Riding Schools
- NT Cutting Association
- Independent Rodeo contractors
- Independent Campdraft organisations
- Cattle Associations (e.g. NT Brahman Breeders Association)
- Working Dog organisations